

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CU-02 DHA-02 IO-13 EUR-12 SY-05

CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00

NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 OPR-02

/093 W

-----018036 211604Z /41

R 211335Z JUL 77

FM AMEMBASSY MBABANE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2301

INFO AMEMBASSY GABORONE

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

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PRETORIA FOR RSO

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, WZ

SUBJECT: POLICE BREAK UP STUDENT PROTEST MEETING

1. FOR THE FIRST TIME IN RECENT MEMORY, ARMED POLICE WERE CALLED FROM MOBILE UNIT HEADQUARTERS IN MATSAPHA, 25 MILES FROM MBABANE, ON JULY 20 TO DISPERSE STUDENTS OF SWAZILAND COLLEGE OF TECHNOLOGY (SCOT) WHO HAD STAYED AWAY FROM CLASS TO ASSEMBLE ON COLLEGE PREMISES TO PROTEST ALLEGED INADEQUACIES IN DORMITORY ACCOMMODATIONS AND FOOD. STUDENTS HAD REFUSED TO STOP THEIR PROTEST DESPITE APPEARANCE OF ACTING PRIME MINISTER ZONKE KHUMALO ON JULY 19 AND DESPITE APPEARANCES NEXT DAY OF TOP OFFICIAL OF KHUMALO'S OFFICE, OF COLLEGE PRINCIPAL (WHO PROMISED TO SUPPLY SHEETS AND BLANKETS), AND OF DISTRICT COMMISSIONER. MOBILE POLICE UNIT FORCED STUDENTS BACK TO CLASSES AND THEN WITHDREW SEVERAL KILOMETERS AWAY TO BE AVAILABLE IN CASE OF RENEWED UNREST. NO ARRESTS WERE MADE.

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2. COMMENT: SCOT IS A VOCATIONAL TRAINING SCHOOL AND NOT REGARDED AS HOTBED OF ADVANCED POLITICAL THINKING. BELIEVE PROTEST, WHICH INCLUDED GRIVANCE OF "BEING TREATED LIKE SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS," WAS INDEED AIMED AT IMPROVING BASIC CONDITIONS AT COLLEGE AND WAS NOT GUISE FOR ACCOMPLISHING POLITICAL OBJECTIVES. SCOT WAS HEADED BY AN ACTING PRINCIPAL UNTIL MAY 1, WHEN

NEW PRINCIPAL WAS NAMED. PROTEST MAY HAVE BEEN
TIMED IN PART TO TEST METTLE OF NEW LEADERSHIP.
STUDENTS' PERSEVERANCE IN THIS CASE NEVERTHELESS
DOUBLY SURPRISING IN VIEW OF TRADITIONAL SWAZI
ATTITUDE OF COMPROMISE AND CONCILIATION AND IN VIEW
OF GOVERNMENT'S WELL-KNOWN NO-NONSENSE APPLICATION OF
SECURITY ACT PERMITTING SIXTY-DAY DETENTION WITHOUT
CHARGES.

3. SCOT IS SEVERAL KILOMETERS FROM DOWNTOWN MBABANE,
WHERE CHANCERY IS LOCATED. NEITHER STUDENT NOR POLICE
ACTIVITY SPILLED OVER INTO AREAS WHERE USG OFFICES OR
RESIDENCES ARE LOCATED.
WACHOB

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: STUDENT DEMONSTRATIONS, CIVIL DISORDERS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 21-Jul-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
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Format: TEL
From: MBABANE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
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ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770734/aaaabcuq.tel
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Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
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Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
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SAS ID: 1791964
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TAGS: PINT, WZ
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